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Department of Law

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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: ALL DIRECTOR'S

FROM: JOANNE Y. WATSON
CORPORATION COUNSEL

RE: OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS ACT
N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 ET SEQ.

DATE: JULY 3, 2002

As a result of a recent amendment to the Public Records Act N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq. the City of Newark is required to comply with its terms commencing on July 8, 2002. Under the statute the Municipal Clerk is designated as the "Custodian of Records".

It is critical that the various departments cooperate with the Office of the City Clerk, as this statute carries with it personal liability for willful violation of the law ranging in amounts \$1,000-5,000. This personal liability covers all public officials, officers, employees or custodians.

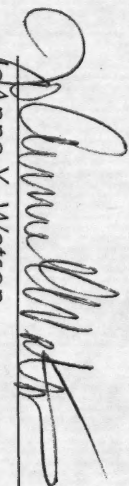
As part of this cooperation I would request that each department forward a memorandum indicating the following

- The number of requests your department receives on an annual basis for public documents.
- The types of public records that are requested.
- The status of those who make the requests ie, individuals, small business, large corporations or law firms.
- Physical location of these documents.

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Also please advise as to the types of legal privileges your department has traditionally asserted on request for public documents. The intent is to enable the City Clerk to anticipate and categorize the types of requests that will be forthcoming with the commencement of this statute on July 8, 2002.

Please refer all responses to William J. Schwartz, 1st Assistant Corporation Counsel.


IdAnne Y. Watson
Corporation Counsel

cc: Richard Montheith, Business Administrator